

GREENBELT News Review

An Independent Newspaper

Inside Stories



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VOL. 88, No. 6

15 Crescent Rd., Suite 100, Greenbelt, MD 20770-1887

JANUARY 2, 2025

Longtime Greenbelt Dentist Dr. James McCarl Retires

by Deanna Dawson

James H. (Jay) McCarl, D.D.S., has retired after practicing dentistry for more than 40 years. He joined the McCarl family dental practice in 1984 after earning a dental degree from the University of Maryland Dental School. The practice started in 1924 when James W. McCarl, Jay's grandfather, opened an office in the family home near Baltimore. He moved to Greenbelt in 1938 (see the September 19, 2024, issue of the News Review). Grandsons Jay, his brother Clayton, Jr., and their cousin David McCarl, became the third generation of McCarl dentists, expanding the practice in 2001 when they opened a second office in Millersville.

Career of Service

Outside the office, Dr. Jay made a few service trips to the Dominican Republic and Haiti years ago, and in 2022 went to



PHOTO COURTESY DR. JAY MCCARL

Dr. Jay McCarl has been treating Greenbelt patients for 40 years.

Poland to provide dental care for Ukrainian refugees. He and the three assistants who accompanied him worked in a convention

center in Warsaw where refugees were processed. He also has volunteered with the Mid-Atlantic

See MCCARL, page 9

Nearby Chelsea Wood Condo Residents Are Without Heat

by Erica Johns

Many Chelsea Wood condominium residents at 8403-8495 Greenbelt Road are without heat this holiday season. Pleas to the management company (RGN Management Services of Largo) and the condo's board of directors and approaches to county and state administrations and elected officials have produced little change. The residents' plight highlights the complexities condominium owners face when things go wrong.

Pipe Failures

The problem stems from a pipe system that serves heating and cooling to the 280 units. Unit owner Jessica Fomalont said that when she moved there in 2005, she was told the heating system was installed in 1965. She said one pipe broke in October 2024, eliminating heat in half the complex. Contractors began work in November and residents were told heat would be restored by Thanksgiving, but the contractors disappeared and RGN had no answers or was unreachable, Fomalont said. When she called RGN's emergency line on Thanksgiving weekend, she was told to call Monday, December 2. When she did, she was told RGN was seeking a less expensive contractor.

New Management

On December 10, another pipe failed, leaving the entire property without heat. RGN notified residents on December 13 that repairs could take at least two weeks, discouraged them from



PHOTO BY ERICA JOHNS

Hot water flows from an underground pipe at Chelsea Wood building 8471 on December 29, affecting the sidewalk to four buildings and nearby woods and, according to resident Jeffrey Samuels, leaking into a basement unit.

using space heaters, encouraged staying elsewhere and cited high owner delinquency rates as limiting funds and impeding obtaining contractors.

Fomalont and three-year owner Jocelyn Cox said RGN hasn't returned calls since Thanksgiving, and that board communications since October have largely consisted of notices that they are working on the problem. The News Review saw a December 23 board notice at the complex that proposals were being reviewed to "determine the best course of action." The board also notified residents in mid-December that a new management company, Metropolis, would take over on January 1.

Living without Heat

Cox described how she and her husband are living in one room at a time with a 6-month-old, a 3-year-old and a space heater, and noted the challenges.

See HEAT, page 8

What Goes On

Monday, January 6
7:30 p.m., Advisory Board/Committee Interviews, via Zoom

Wednesday, January 8
No City Council Meeting; Maryland Municipal League Reception

See the city ad on page 5 or the meetings calendar at greenbeltdmd.gov for more information.

Top Stories of 2024

The News Review presents highlights from last year's news stories. The reviews were prepared by Cathie Meetre, Erica Johns, Diane Oberg, Deanna Dawson, Pat Scully and Anna Bedford-Dillow.

Greenbelt Loses Career Firefighters

On June 30, Prince George's County Fire Department (PGFD) removed career fire and rescue personnel from Greenbelt, Berwyn Heights, Bowie and Bunker Hill as part of its temporary Summer Staffing Plan. Greenbelt's Fire Chief Thomas Ray said there was potential for no fire and EMS services Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. in Greenbelt. PGFD estimated response times to Greenbelt would fall within the eight-minute range, which City Manager Josué Salmerón noted meant response times could double.



PHOTO BY SANDY RODGERS

Greenbelt Volunteer Fire Department

As a concession, a career-staffed Advanced Life Support unit was stationed at Greenbelt Monday to Friday. A second unit that is staffed and active during peak hours was later added.

Greenbelt, Berwyn Heights and College Park sued to prevent the removal of the career staff but their request for a temporary restraining order was dismissed in July. In October their complaint for a declaratory judgement was dismissed.

Greenbelt has highlighted several concerning incidents since the removal of career personnel, including a delayed response to a fire alarm at Green Ridge House, which led to a PGFD investigation and suspension of personnel. In addition, on Gardenway a man died after suffering anaphylactic shock and waiting at least seven minutes for an ambulance.

The PGFD staffing crisis continues. In December PGFD sent some new recruits back to Bunker Hill and others to Laurel but none are planned for return to Greenbelt. On December 29 Greenbelt was to gain a 24/7 paramedic ambulance and begin housing the Northern EMS Duty Officer.

Problems at Charlestowne North

Trouble had been brewing at the Charlestowne North rental apartments on Lakecrest Drive since their purchase in January of 2023 by the Charlestowne North Holding Company. Poor maintenance, lack of security, understaffing and trash buildup were accompanied, though less visibly, by the complete failure of the holding company to pay state and local taxes and fees. Eventually, disrepair of the aging elevators led to the city pulling the company's rental license in late 2023 and subsequent legal proceedings culminated in the appointment of Tarantino Properties (based in Texas) as receiver to manage the property – a role, according to its website, that it has played 60+ times. The property was purchased in April at auction by Freddie Mac (which had insured the mortgage). Tarantino remains the property manager.



PHOTO BY ANNA BEDFORD-DILLON

Charlestowne North apartments

Problems continue. New elevator cars are not scheduled for delivery until February 2025, leaving residents, especially those with mobility challenges, anxious. Complaints include utility costs being charged separately when they were previously included. Twenty-three residents were recently taken to court for unpaid rent by the bankrupt former owner though all the cases were eventually dismissed.

Knesel Appointed to City Council

On January 24, Amy Knesel was appointed to fill the seat of the late Councilmember Ric Gordon following a divisive and controversial process. Initially, Mayor Emmett Jordan pushed council to fill the position quickly, setting up a one-week deadline for application. Six candidates applied, but at two listening sessions council was criticized by some residents for the rushed approach. One Franklin Park resident pleaded with council to extend the deadline with



PHOTO COURTESY AMY KNESEL

Amy Knesel

See TOP STORIES, page 6

Letters to the Editor

Thank You From Carriers

Thank you to the generous Greenbelters who gave us tips for delivering your News Review this year. We are grateful to be a part of this great Greenbelt tradition and earn some money. We're sure the rest of the carriers will agree. Happy New Year.

Max and Skylar Leishman

Rescind the Rebuke

Our council's public rebuke of Councilmember Rodney Roberts, headlined in the News Review, was not only unwarranted, it was reprehensible and needs to be reversed.

Whatever council's intent, its rebuke shut out a voice that reflects and contributes to our diversity. Worse, it demeaned a man who has faithfully served our community for more than three decades. Roberts' commitment has been so strong that he once withdrew his pension and used it to block the dumping of toxic waste into our waterways. This and other actions reflect

Roberts' deep devotion to our community. Roberts has also been a voice for fiscal responsibility and wise use of our tax dollars.

In reviewing video recordings of council meetings, I did not see or hear any breach of ethics or improper conduct by Roberts. Nor did I hear a problem with "tone." He was not strident, edgy or overbearing. He spoke only a few minutes and rather quietly.

What I did see were his legitimate concerns about the use of our tax monies, including the need to get more than one estimate. Roberts' questions were in keeping with council's responsibility for fiscal oversight.

Unlike council's public treatment of him, Roberts did not name or defame anyone – no staff person was named. One councilmember even insisted that they make "an example" of Roberts. The most potentially objectionable word he used was "dumb." However, he did not apply this word to a specific person. He used "you" generically to mean it is not smart for anyone to seek

only one estimate and thereby submit to inflated pricing. In voting to publicly rebuke Roberts, council tarnished the name of a decent human being. In the process, council has tarnished its own image.

Council's public rebuke made some of us wonder about the conduct, ethics and wisdom of the councilmembers we elected. The wise thing now would be for council to publicly rescind its rebuke and apologize to Roberts. It would help restore public faith in the council's readiness to include all members of our community, including all fellow councilmembers, in its commitment to justice, equality, diversity and inclusion.

Pat Mische



A cardinal waits for the red camellia flowers to burst from their buds. He won't have to wait long, as camellias are winter bloomers.



On Screen at Greenbelt Cinema

A Complete Unknown

New York, 1961. Against the backdrop of a vibrant music scene and tumultuous cultural upheaval, Bob Dylan (Timothée Chalamet), an enigmatic 19-year-old from Minnesota, arrives with his guitar and revolutionary talent, destined to change the course of American music. He forges intimate relationships with music icons of Greenwich Village on his meteoric rise, culminating in a groundbreaking and controversial performance that reverberates worldwide. Chalamet stars and sings as Bob Dylan in the electric true story behind the rise of one of the most iconic singer-songwriters in history. Said critic Sam Adams of *Slate*, "A Complete Unknown is a fine movie about Bob Dylan ... but it's a better movie about the people who watched him do it, the die-hard believers who saw him as their greatest hope, then their greatest adversary."

Babygirl

A high-powered CEO (Nicole Kidman) puts her career and family on the line when she begins a torrid affair with her much younger intern (Harris Dickinson). "Kidman is a marvel here," said critic Rubén Rosario of *MiamiArtZine*.

Viva Las Vegas

All musically gifted race-driver Lucky Jackson (Elvis Presley) wants in Las Vegas is to score enough money for a new car motor so he can win the Grand Prix. When he encounters sexy swimming instructor Rusty (Ann-Margret), he considers staying around longer. After Lucky loses his winnings in the hotel pool, he's forced to remain in Vegas long enough to win back his dough – but now he also wants to win Rusty's heart. Unfortunately, so does his slick racing enemy, Elmo (Cesare Danova).



greenbelt CINEMA
Greenbelt Cinema
129 Centerway
301-329-2034
www.greenbeltcinema.org
Members Always \$6.50!
Member kids are always FREE!
Adults \$9, Kids \$6,
Senior/Student/Military \$8
All shows before 5 PM:
Adults \$7, Kids \$5
OC = Open Captions
CC = Closed Captions
DVS = Descriptive Video Service

SHOWTIMES:
JANUARY 3rd - 9th

A Complete Unknown (R)
(CC) (DVS) (2024) (140 mins)
Screen 1 - Main Auditorium

Sat. 5:00 PM, 8:00 PM
Mon. 3:30 PM (OC)
Wed. 7:00 PM

Screen 2 - The Screening Room

Fri. 5:00 PM, 8:00 PM
Sun. 2:00 PM, 5:00 PM
Mon. 3:15 PM
Tues. 7:00 PM
Thurs. 7:45 PM

Babygirl (R) (CC) (DVS)
(2024) (114 mins)

Screen 1 - Main Auditorium

Fri. 5:15 PM, 8:15 PM
Sun. 2:15 PM (OC), 5:15 PM
Tues. 7:15 PM
Thurs. 5:30 PM

Screen 2 - The Screening Room

Sat. 5:15 PM, 8:15 PM
Mon. 12:45 PM, 6:15 PM
Wed. 7:15 PM

Viva Las Vegas (NR) (1964)
(85 mins)

Free Cinema Classic
Screen 1 - Main Auditorium
Mon. 1:00 PM
Thurs. 8:00 PM



My New Year's resolution is to be more real.

- Michael Kusie, News Review, January 20, 2022

Letters Policy

Deadline for letters is 6 p.m. Monday. Submission does not guarantee publication. Letters should be no longer than 300 words (shorter letters are more likely to be published).

Letters may be edited for clarity, grammar, civility and space constraints. The News Review may add a comment from the editor if deemed necessary.

All letters must include the letter writer's name, physical address, and telephone number. Only the name will be published; the News Review will consider requests for the name to be withheld.



Greenbelt News Review

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PUBLICATION DEADLINES:

- Monday 2 p.m. Articles/photos over 700 words, Display ads (not camera ready).
- Monday 6 p.m. All letters to the editor (300 word limit).
- Tuesday 2 p.m. Articles/photos under 700 words, photographs not associated with a story.
- Tuesday 6 p.m. Classified ads and camera-ready display ads.
- Email submission is available. Hardcopy submissions (delivered by respective deadline) may be mailed to the address above or left in the Co-op grocery store drop box or GNR external office door mail slot, as shown below.
- Payment must accompany ads except by prior arrangement.

MAIL SUBSCRIPTION: \$55/year

Greenbelt Community Center at 15 Crescent Rd.
OFFICE HOURS: Monday and Tuesday, 2 - 4 p.m.
GNR external office door mail slot is located up a few stairs 25 yards left of the Community Center's east door near the Municipal Building.

Community Events

GIVES Needs Drivers

The Greenbelt Intergenerational Volunteer Exchange Service (GIVES) is an all-volunteer, nonprofit organization that helps adult Greenbelt residents with transportation and friendly visits, along with other services. More drivers are urgently needed to meet the increase in requests for services. To be a driver for GIVES, one needs to be a resident of Greenbelt, be a member of GIVES, have a valid Maryland license and insurance, and obtain a free background check. Membership is free. For information or an application, call 301-507-6580 or visit givesgreenbelt.org.

Golden Age Club

The Golden Age Club meets most Wednesdays at 11 a.m. in Room 201 of the Community Center. The club does not meet when inclement weather delays or closes Prince George's County schools.

The schedule through January is as follows.

January 8 – Business Meeting with swearing-in of new officers. Membership dues are due.

January 15 – Bringing in the New Year with a sing-along with Chris and Stefan.

January 22 – Celebration of members with January birthdays.

January 29 – New Year closet inventory with Jan Derry. Jan tells us how to inventory our closets to be more efficient in our homes.

Poetry in the Garden

The Poetry Club will welcome a new guest speaker at its poetry reading on Sunday, January 5 from 3 to 5 p.m. in the clubhouse of Schrom Hills Park. The topic for this meeting is Native American Poetry and Culture. The public is invited to this free event. Attendees can read their own poem or just enjoy listening. Refreshments will be served.

For more details, call Effie at 443-415-1053.

Mahjongg Now Played Wednesday Afternoons

Want to learn how to play American mahjongg? Abby Crowley will offer a free four-week class beginning Wednesday, January 8 from 11:45 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Those with some experience are welcome to come play on Wednesdays from 1 to 4 p.m. in Room 109 in the Community Center.

Register for either the class or to play at the Recreation Department office in the Community Center. Both are free.

GREA Meeting On January 7

The Greenbelt Racial Equity Alliance (GREA) will hold its next quarterly meeting on Tuesday, January 7 from 7 to 8:30 p.m. through Zoom. Agenda items include reviewing Tribesey Consulting's Phase II report on JEDI in the community, reviewing CASA's plans to support immigrants and planning for 2025 efforts.

For a link to the meeting, go to the GREA website, greenbeltracialequity.org/events.

Lafayette Credit Union Hosts Budget Workshop

Lafayette Federal Credit Union is hosting a Budgeting Basics Workshop on Saturday, January 25 from 1 to 3 p.m. at the Credit Union in Greenway Center.

This workshop is designed to provide any and all community members with techniques to take control of their finances. In this interactive session, experts will outline how to track income and expenses, master budgeting basics, create a personalized budget plan and more. Light fare is included. RSVP at lfcu.events/budget0125.

State Offers Grants For Individual Artists

The Maryland State Arts Council announced a unique funding opportunity that provides \$2,500 in holistic support to Maryland-based independent artists, helping them cover essential living and working expenses. The application deadline is Friday, January 17.

This program is designed to be accessible to independent artists statewide, with an eligibility-based application process and no critical review of work samples. All eligible applications are entered into a randomized selection process, ensuring an equal chance for all applicants.

For more details about the program, eligibility criteria and application process, visit msac.org/programs/grants-artists. Those with questions or needing assistance, email Jess Porter, senior program director, at jess.porter@maryland.gov.

More Community Events are located throughout the paper.

Stamp Out Hunger Close to Home

The impact of a fully stocked pantry is profound. The shelves were emptied at the Greenbelt Interfaith Leadership Association (GILA) food pantry at St. Hugh's during the holidays. To help keep the shelves stocked, PORCH will pick up nonperishable food placed on porches as scheduled below.

Sunday, January 12 – by 11 a.m. at the 1-8 Courts Ridge Road, 1-8 Courts Crescent Road and 1-2 Courts Westway.

Saturday, January 18 – by 10 a.m. for 14 and 15 Courts Laurel Hill Road.

Sunday, January 19 – by noon P.A.L. (PORCH at large) members (including former Woodland Hills donors). Contact Robert Goldberg-Strassler at spreadruak@gmail.com; he will come by and take donations from the porch after 4 p.m.

Sunday, January 19 – by 4 p.m. for Boxwood Village.

Sunday, January 26 – by 4 p.m. for 14 and 16 Courts Ridge Road, 8 and 10 Courts Southway, and by 5 p.m. for Lakeside Drive.



GAC Invites Proposals

Calling all actors, directors, dancers, singers, musicians, poets and artists of all kinds: the Greenbelt Arts Center (GAC) is seeking proposals for productions for the 2025-2026 season. For those with a project in mind that might be a good fit for the GAC stage, click through to the submission form and give the details. Visit GreenbeltArtsCenter.org to access the submission form. Proposal submissions will be accepted until Sunday, January 5.



Bilingual Story Time At SHL Rec Center

On Friday, January 10 at 10:30 a.m. at the Springhill Lake Recreation Center, RUAK (Random Unselfish Acts of Kindness) with the Prince George's County Memorial Library System will present engaging, lively stories and activities for young children and their caregivers to help build early literacy skills. This monthly program is an introduction to reading aloud to children as a way to instill the love of literature. After the readings, the children can stay and play with balls in the gym. There will be free children's books and free, healthy, nutritious snacks. Come, and spread the word to friends and family.

Los Niños Leen y Juegan

El viernes 10 de enero a las 10:30 a.m. en el Centro Recreativo de Springhill Lake, RUAK (Random Unselfish Acts of Kindness) con el Sistema de Bibliotecas Conmemorativas del Condado de Prince George's presentarán interesantes historias y actividades divertidas para niños pequeños y sus cuidadores, para ayudar a desarrollar las habilidades de alfabetización temprana. Este programa mensual es una introducción a la lectura en voz alta a los niños como forma de inculcar el amor por la literatura. Después de las lecturas, los niños pueden quedarse y jugar con pelotas en el gimnasio. Habrán libros infantiles gratis y aperitivos saludables y nutritivos. Como dijo un padre al irse, "Fue muy bueno!" Unete a nosotros, y corra la voz a amigos y familiares.

Volunteers Needed For Tool Library

The Greenbelt Makerspace seeks volunteers to staff the tool library and organize classes and other events. Sign up for shifts at signup.com/go/UNkLnqk or email us at staff@make125.org if interested in other times or jobs.

At the Library

The Library's regular hours are Mondays 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., Tuesdays and Wednesdays noon to 8 p.m., Thursdays and Fridays 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., Saturdays 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sundays 1 to 5 p.m.

All in-person events are on hiatus during the holiday season through January 4.

Storytimes

Wednesday, January 8, 12:15 p.m., ages 3 to 5. Register at pgcmls.info/event/12329120.

Thursday, January 9, 10:15 a.m., ages newborn to 2. Register at pgcmls.info/event/12329146.

Reading Challenge

The Prince George's County Memorial Library System is again participating in the Washington Wizards Winter Reading Challenge, through March 14. See pgcmls.info/wizards for more information.

News Suite

The PGCMLS News Suite (pgcmls.info/news-suite) offers quick and easy access to many national and international newspapers and magazines, including digital editions of the Washington Post, New York Times and Wall Street Journal, plus the Baltimore Sun and USA Today via Press-Reader.

In-person Programs Suspended till Jan. 5

There is a systemwide hiatus for all in-person library programs through January 4. Passport acceptance service is also suspended through January 4. In-person programs at the Greenbelt Library will resume on the lower level with Ready 2 Read Storytimes for various preschool ages after that time (see above).

The Greenbelt Library Teen Action Group program remains on hiatus until further notice.



This Week at the New Deal Café

SUPPORT Greenbelt's only venue with BOTH dinner AND a show!

UNDER NEW MANAGEMENT



FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK.

113 Centerway, Roosevelt Center, Greenbelt, MD
Monday 9am-10pm; Tuesday—Thursday 9am - 10pm; Friday/Saturday 8am – 12midnight;
Sunday 9am – 9pm

TH 1/02

FRENCH CONVERSATION,
5:30p - 6:30pm
Wolf's Blues Show & Sit-In Jam
6:30-10pm
Big, bodacious boogie blues jam

FRI 1/03

BACK ROOM CLOSED
12:30-5pm
The Pilgrims of Deep Run
8-11pm
Baltimore-based Irish trad group with lively new arrangements

SAT 1/04

Tommy Lepson & The Bad Dawgs
8-11pm
Roots Americana and original, funky covers

SUN 1/05

An Eastern-European Throwdown
6-8pm
Orchester Prazevica & Seth Kibel's Klezmer All-Stars

MON 1/06

MONDAY MAUVENESS KARAOKE
6-9pm
Host: Mike Bennett

TUES 1/07

S.A.W. Open Mic
6 - 9:30pm
Sign-ups at 6pm.
Featured act plays from 8 - 8:30pm

WED 1/08

Elvis Birthday Tribute Show w/ InToneNation
7-9pm
Classic & roots rock & blues

TH 1/09

FRENCH CONVERSATION,
5:30p - 6:30pm
Groovequest
7 - 9pm
A fun D.C.-based rock and roll band

PLEASE TIP GENEROUSLY.
IT'S THE ONLY PAY BANDS RECEIVE, AND WE WANT THEM TO COME BACK!
[MINIMUM: \$10]

Join NDC! Go to [NewDealCafe\(dot\)com](http://NewDealCafe(dot)com), click on "ABOUT", then "BECOME A MEMBER OR RENEW".

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Greenbelt Access Television
Verizon FIOS Channel 19 • Comcast 77
(School Programming on Your Cable Guide)
Streaming on www.greenbeltaccessstv.org

Digital Animation
With Mister Geo
Tuesdays, January 7th - March 11th
5pm - 7pm
Ages 11+

Stop Motion Animation Storytelling
With Ali Everitt
Mondays, January 6th - February 24th
5:30pm - 7pm
Ages 8-15

Visit GreenbeltAccessTV.org for more classes and in-studio offerings!

Obituaries

Betty Jo Edwards



PHOTO COURTESY THE FAMILY

Bob Cassels



PHOTO COURTESY THE FAMILY

Bob Cassels

It is with great sadness that the family of Bob Cassels announce his sudden death on Sunday, December 15, 2024, at the age of 74.

Bob was born in Chicago on July 8, 1950. He grew up in Greenbelt, the son of Jim Cassels, where he formed close friendships that have lasted to this day. A gifted student, Bob received many academic accolades throughout middle and secondary school, where he exhibited a penchant for computer science. He attended North End Elementary, Greenbelt Junior High and High Point High School.

Bob graduated from Michigan State University with a bachelor's degree in computer science, linguistics and mathematics and a master's degree in computer science. He subsequently spent one year as a graduate student in computer science at MIT before embarking on a successful career

Lottery Luck Strikes Again

Another \$50,000 Maryland Scratch-Off prize was claimed last week. The winner bought the ticket at the Royal Farms store on Capitol Drive.

Toastmasters Meet

The Greenbelt Toastmasters Club invites all to join them online every first, third and fifth Wednesday of the month at 7:30 p.m. Improve public speaking and leadership skills. Learn more at greenbelt.toastmastersclubs.org.

Français, s'il vous plaît: French at the Café

A group of people interested in speaking French meets at the New Deal Café every Thursday from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. All ages, all levels of fluency are welcome.

Community Orchestra Welcomes Musicians

Greenbelt Community Orchestra rehearses on Thursday evenings at the Community Center and welcomes new members, especially strings and low brass. For more information, visit GreenbeltOrchestra.org.

Concert Band Seeks Players

The Greenbelt Concert Band is seeking more trumpet, French horn, tuba and percussion players. Email director@greenbelconcertband.org or visit the website at greenbelconcertband.org.



City Information & Events

The strength of Greenbelt is diverse people living together in a spirit of cooperation. We celebrate all people. By sharing together all are enriched. We strive to be a respectful, welcoming community that is open, accessible, safe and fair.

MEETINGS FOR JANUARY 6 - 10

Monday, January 6 at 6:30 pm, **SPECIAL MEETING/CLOSED SESSION – COLLECTIVE BARGAINING NEGOTIATIONS AND DEPLOYMENT OF FIRE PROTECTION AND SERVICES (VIRTUAL)**

Monday, January 6 at 7:30 pm, **ADVISORY BOARD / COMMITTEE INTERVIEWS (VIRTUAL)**

Tuesday, January 7 at 7 pm, **ARTS ADVISORY BOARD**, On the Agenda: Approval of Agenda/Minutes, Discussions: Murals / Pamphlet

Tuesday, January 7 at 7 pm, **PUBLIC SAFETY ADVISORY COMMITTEE**, On the Agenda: Status of Revised Department License Plate Reader General Orders / PSAC Recommendations, Agreed Upon Timeline for Resolving Discrepancies in General Orders (674 and 620) with Council Resolutions

Wednesday, January 8, **NO MEETING - MML RECEPTION**

Thursday, January 9 at 5:30 pm, **BOARD OF ELECTIONS**

In advance, the hearing impaired are advised to use MD RELAY at 711 to submit your questions/comments or contact the City Clerk at (301) 474-8000 or email banderson@greenbeltd.gov. This schedule is subject to change. For confirmation that a meeting is being held call (301) 474-8000. For information on public participation for the meetings above, visit the meetings calendar at www.greenbeltd.gov/calendar.

UNDERSTANDING ALZHEIMER'S & DEMENTIA THURSDAY, JANUARY 9 AT 7 PM

Registration Link: <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/108508677645079382>.

Please contact Brendy Maddox at (240) 424-0302 or bgarcia@greenbeltd.gov.

OUT OF HARMS WAY THURSDAY, JANUARY 23RD AT 7PM

Registration Link: <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/8027883382980836699>.

Please contact Brendy Maddox at (240) 424-0302 or bgarcia@greenbeltd.gov.

FREE PRODUCE DISTRIBUTION

UPCOMING PRODUCE DISTRIBUTIONS THURSDAY, JANUARY 16, FEBRUARY 20, MARCH 20

Greenbelt Community Center, 15 Crescent Road, Lower Parking Lot: 1 - 3 pm, while supplies last. Open to all Greenbelt residents. Must have a registration card via Brendy Garcia Maddox at (240) 424-0302 or bgarcia@greenbeltd.gov.

Springhill Lake Recreation Center: Registration required. For Greenbelt West residents only. Register via email bgarcia@greenbeltd.gov.

CHRISTMAS TREE COLLECTION!

Your discarded Christmas tree can be recycled. Public Works will pickup trees at locations listed below or online. Please insure all ornaments and lights are removed. Drop off your trees for recycling at specified areas up until **February 7, 2025**.

GHI
• Ridge Road, 73 Court (opposite playground)
• Plateau Place and Ridge Road (corner on playground side)
• Research Road and Hillside Road (corner)
• Ridge Road, 44 Court (Area near playground)
• Eastway & Crescent Road (corner)
• Ridge Road, 21 Court (across from Green Ridge House)
• Crescent Road and Ridge Road (playground at junction)
• Parkway (corner across from 58 Court Crescent Road)
• Parkway (corner across from Community Church)
• Southway, 7 Court (playground at Little League field)
• Ridge Road, 11 Court and 13 Court (area between courts)

BOXWOOD
• Ivy Lane and Lastner Lane (playground)

Lakewood
• Greenhill Road & Crescent Road (by Baptist Church)

CHARLESTOWNE VILLAGE AND CHARLESTOWNE NORTH
• Property adjacent to Attic Park

UNIVERSITY SQUARE
• In front of swimming pool

LAKESIDE NORTH
• Near Swimming pool

SPRINGHILL LAKE
• Field past 9294 Edmonston

GREENBRIAR
• Between buildings 7708 & 7710
• Between buildings 7728 & 7730
• Between buildings 7826 & 7828
• Between buildings 8003 & 8009

GLEN OAKS

- Between buildings 7903 & 7905
- Between buildings 7509 & 7511

HUNTING RIDGE

- Between buildings 6936 & 6978

WINDSOR GREEN

- At court entrances, picked up by Windsor Green staff

GREENBROOK VILLAGE AND ESTATES

- Southeast corner of Ora Glen Dr & Matthew Dr
- Southeast corner of Hanover Parkway and Greenbrook Drive
- In front of barricade - Mandan Road & Matthew St

GREENWOOD VILLAGE

- Opposite 8175 Mandan
- Opposite 7646 Mandan
- Opposite 7648 Mandan

GREENSPRING AND GREENSPRING II

- Southwest corner of Megan Lane & Craddock Rd
- Park area between 7926 & 8006 Greenbury Dr
- Corner of Spring Manor Drive & Springshire Way
- Open area between 6519 & 6515 Springcrest Dr

BELLE POINT

- Corner of Vanity Fair Dr. & Prince James Way
- Open area between 7800 & 7801 Vanity Fair Dr.
- Open area beside 7962 Vanity Fair Drive

GREENBELT VILLAGE

- Open area between 6729 & 6715 Village Park Dr
- Open area across from 6632 Lake Park Drive
- Open area across from 6510 & 6512 Lake Park Dr

GREENBELT STATION

- Central Park field along Stream Bank Lane



OFFICIAL NOTICE

By Section 3-305(b)(9) and (10) of the General Provisions Article of the Annotated Code of the Public General Laws of Maryland, a closed session of the Greenbelt City Council will be held on Monday, January 6, 2025, at 6:30 pm, virtually via Zoom: 1) to conduct collective bargaining negotiations or consider matters that related to negotiations and 2) to discuss public security, if the public body determines that public security, if the public body determines that public discussion would constitute a risk to the public or to public security, including: (i) the deployment of fire and police services and staff; and (ii) the development and implementation of emergency plans. .

The purpose of this meeting is 1) to discuss Collective Bargaining Negotiations and 2) deployment of fire protection and services.

** The public may attend the Special Council Meeting of the City Council immediately before the closed session and observe the vote of the Council to move into the closed session on Monday, January 6, 2025.*

Shaniya Lashley-Mullen, Deputy City Clerk

APPLICANTS WANTED FOR CHARTER REVIEW TASKFORCE

The City of Greenbelt is seeking applicants to join the Charter Review Task Force. This is a great opportunity to contribute to the future of our community. For more information or to apply, please contact City Clerk at banderson@greenbeltd.gov or (301) 474-3870.

RECOGNITION GROUP APPLICATIONS ARE OPEN

Fiscal Year 2026 Recognition Group applications and policy guide are now available on the City website at <https://www.greenbeltd.gov/government/recreation-parks/recognition-groups-applications>.

Applications are due by close of business Monday February 3, 2025.

Please call Cathryn Pracht at (240) 542-2196 with any questions.

PROPOSED COUNCIL VACANCY PROCESS

The proposed Council Vacancy Process legislation will be introduced for a first reading on **December 9**. A public hearing on the proposed Council Vacancy Process will be held on **January 13, 2025**.

The Greenbelt Board of Elections has proposed two options for the Council to consider in the event of a vacancy on City Council. If "Option 1" is chosen, legislation will need to be drafted to amend the Election Code. Alternatively, if "Option 2" is selected, legislation will need to be drafted to amend the City Charter. Both options will follow the proposed timeline for filling the vacancy as follows:

1. VACANCY OCCURS (REASON: DEATH, RESIGNATION, INCAPACITY, OR FAILURE TO PARTICIPATE):

- Determine the timing of the vacancy in relation to the next election

2. MORE THAN 180 DAYS BEFORE NEXT ELECTION:

Special Mail-in Election:

- Candidates must file nomination papers.
- Ballots are mailed to voters.
- Voters have 30 days to respond.

3. BETWEEN 60 AND 180 DAYS BEFORE NEXT ELECTION:

Council Majority Vote:

- Seat filled by majority vote after a public hearing.

4. Within 60 Days of Next Election:

Council Discretion:

- The seat may remain vacant or may be filled at the Council's discretion.

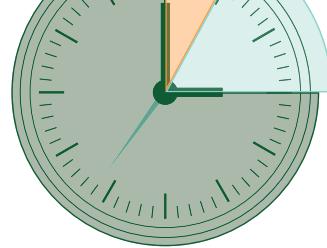
5. SIMULTANEOUS VACANCIES:

- If three or more vacancies occur simultaneously, a special election is required.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Visit www.greenbeltd.gov/elections

OR scan the QR code below



GREENBELT CITY CALENDAR

Be sure to check out the City calendar for all up to date events at www.greenbeltd.gov/calendar.



PUBLIC STATEMENT REGARDING PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY FIRE/EMS SUMMER STAFFING PLAN FOR GREENBELT VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

Greenbelt, MD - The City of Greenbelt is disappointed in the County's decision to reassign 24 career personnel from Greenbelt Station 835 on July 1, resulting in the removal of all career personnel from our Station. County Fire Chief Tiffany Green and County leadership ordered the redeployment of 55 career firefighters from Berwyn Heights, Greenbelt, Bunker Hill, and Bowie Station. We are gravely concerned with the impact in response times of emergencies in Greenbelt and our surrounding areas.

Greenbelt will continue to work in tandem with College Park and Berwyn Heights alongside County leadership in addressing our concerns and fighting for the City of Greenbelt.

WHO CAN I CONTACT?

Office of the County Executive
countyexecutive@co.pg.md.us
(301) 952-4131

Office of the County Fire Chief
tdgreen@co.pg.md.us
(301) 883-5200

At-Large County Council Member Hawkins
At-LargeMemberHawkins@co.pg.md.us
(301) 952-2195

County Council Member District 4
councildistrict4@co.pg.md.us
(301) 952-3094

Letters of Support to keep/return career staffing to Greenbelt Station 835 can be sent to:

City of Greenbelt, 25 Crescent Road, Greenbelt, MD 20770 or council@greenbeltd.gov.

AGING SOLO

6-week program that will have speakers and group discussions. To register, (240) 424-0302.

COMMITTEES & BOARDS VACANCIES VOLUNTEER TODAY!

Volunteering for City of Greenbelt Committees & Boards is an excellent opportunity to engage with your community and make a difference. Choose from a number of committees & boards such as the **Advisory Committee on Trees**, **Senior Citizens Advisory Committee**, **Youth Advisory Committee**, or the **Advisory Committee on Education**, Arts Advisory Board, Board of Elections, Community Relations Advisory Board, Employee Relations Advisory Board, Forest Preserve Advisory Board, Greenbelt Advisory Committee on Environmental Sustainability, or the Park and Recreation Advisory Board and make a difference in Greenbelt!

Take the first step towards making a positive impact and apply for one of these committee vacancies today! Call (301) 474-8000.

TOP STORIES continued from page 1

another saying that one week was not sufficient to get the information out. In the end, council extended the deadline, interviewed candidates, then held a special meeting on January 24 where, after extended discussions over process, a mid-meeting closed session and two votes, it appointed Knesel. In response to this experience, at the year's final meeting council introduced legislation, proposed by the Board of Elections, to change the process for filling council vacancies.

Students Shot at Schrom Hills Park Gathering

On April 19 during Senior Skip Day, five teenagers were shot at Schrom Hills Park. The gathering of youths there grew quickly to five to six hundred, and Greenbelt police were on the scene for crowd control prior to the shooting. The victims were all male students aged 16 to 18. Two attended Bowie Greenbelt Police vehicles at High School, two attended Dr. Schrom Hills Park



PHOTO BY CATHERINE HOLINGSWORTH/THE BOWIE SUN

Henry A. Wise High School and one attended Largo High School. One teenager was in critical condition but all recovered from the shooting. Greenbelt police officers provided aid to the victims as they awaited ambulances.

On April 29, Greenbelt Chief of Police Richard Bowers announced the arrest of a 14-year-old and a 16-year-old, both male and both Bowie High School students. Aisha Braveboy, State's Attorney for Prince George's County, was present in Greenbelt for the press conference and stated that the teens would be tried as adults, for attempted homicide. Later their cases were moved to juvenile court.

In late November the first of the teenagers stood trial and was acquitted when he was not proven beyond reasonable doubt to be one of the shooters.

Black History Committee Wins Award

The Greenbelt Black History and Culture Committee had a busy year, again organizing and co-sponsoring, with other community groups, events throughout Black History Month in February. The committee commemorated the Juneteenth national holiday by co-hosting, with the Prince George's County Lynching Memorial Project, the awards ceremony for the Project's Racial Justice Essay and Creative Arts contest, in which students from seven county high schools competed. In November, the committee collaborated with Greenbelt Recreation, the Greenbelt Museum and the Prince George's County Office of Human Rights to present two Maryland Emancipation Day programs: a film screening and a well-attended, thought-provoking panel discussion of reparations, including from a Native American perspective.

The committee's efforts were recognized in April, when they and Greenbelt Recreation were selected to receive the Maryland Recreation and Parks Association's Innovative Program Award.



PHOTO BY LATOYA FISHER

From left, Greg Varda, director of the Greenbelt Recreation Department; Lois Rosado, chair of the Greenbelt Black History and Culture Committee; and Anne Oudemans, city liaison and assistant director of Greenbelt Recreation Programs

DKFI Move Stirs Controversy

On February 1 the News Review broke the news of Prince George's County Public Schools' (PGCPS) plan to move Dora Kennedy French Immersion (DKFI) out of Greenbelt and the building it's occupied for a decade. It was news that had not been shared with the school's principal or community but was divulged in Greenbelt City Council's January worksession with PGCPS Superintendent Millard House II and members of his team. PGCPS planned to move DKFI to Kenmoor Middle School in Landover and then use the Greenbelt building as a swing space for Springhill Lake Elementary while their new school is built.

The PGCPS administration held a virtual town hall in February to belatedly inform the DKFI community. At the end of that meeting, PGCPS administrators, believing the streaming had ended, spoke candidly and Chief Operating Officer Charoscar Coleman said, "I feel like we're doubling down on a bad decision." PGCPS later decided to move DKFI to a shared location with Robert Goddard Montessori, off Good Luck Road in Seabrook. DKFI occupied that space previously, when it was known as the Robert Goddard French Immersion School, prior to moving to its own building in Greenbelt in 2014. The school's move back to Robert Goddard is set to take place in 2026.

See TOP STORIES, page 7



Signs of Change: Wayfinding On the City's Roads and Trails

by Cathie Meetre

On Monday, December 16, Greenbelt City Council met in a worksession on the topic of wayfinding signage. This is the concept of a consistent design for signage in the city to first welcome visitors and then provide subsequent signage levels that help residents and visitors find their destinations, know they've arrived and, once there, find out more about them. A consistent and iconic design can also project the character and identity of the community.

Wayfinding signage has four levels: arrival notification, directional information, location identification and additional descriptive material. It includes the concept that signage should be consistently located and incorporate systematic coloring and text design that enhances accessibility and predictability.

Design Team

Program Manager Lubna Chaudhry and Program Director Christina Hartsfield of the Neighborhood Design Center in Hyattsville attended with Anu Nair of the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC), who gave the presentation. The city's Arts Advisory and Advisory Planning Boards have also reviewed an earlier version of the material which will evolve through a series of steps before being put into practice. The advisory boards reviewed two initial designs and, at their suggestion, a third (an Art Deco concept) was added.

Nair walked through slides depicting the process and illustrating initial design concepts (available from the city's website and embedded in the meeting agenda at greenbeltdmd.gov/government/city-council/minutes-agendas-videos-and-documents).

Current Signage

Signs in the city are inconsistent in design and color. Many are wooden signs painted brown while the others are individualistic. City Manager Josué Salmerón noted that the wooden signs are made in-house from easily available materials and thus are easy and inexpensive to replace or maintain. He noted that signs are vulnerable, giving as an example how someone recently drove into and destroyed one. The proposed signage, in contrast, would likely have to be commercially obtained and maintained.

Some road signage, especially on Kenilworth Avenue and Greenbelt Road, falls under state jurisdiction and must conform to their standards. The proposals before council are aimed at the more local signs under the control of the city (though there are also city-level design constraints on directional road signs).

Community Survey

A community survey completed by 178 individuals, half from the center of the city and mostly older (typical demographics for such surveys in the city) who were asked to identify sites in the city for which signage might be appropriate – places they went to or recognized as important to city life in some way. Based on this, the development team mapped and categorized key sites, including historical and commercial locations. Most sites identified

Signage Conceptual Design Option 3

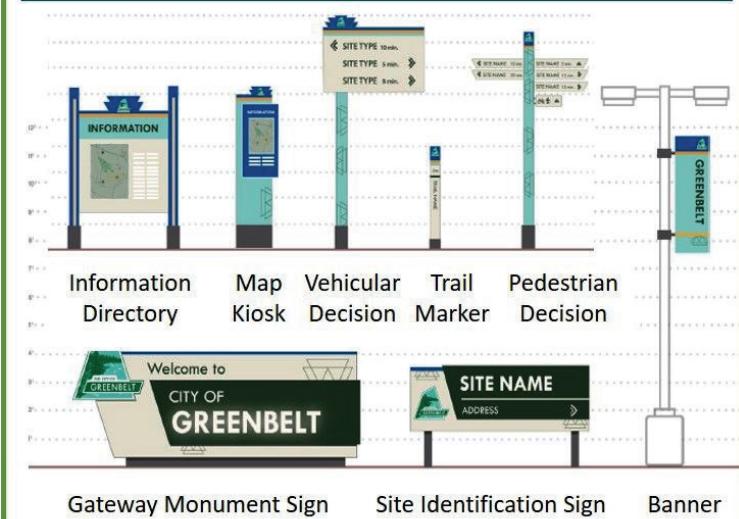


PHOTO COURTESY NEIGHBORHOOD DESIGN CENTER

One of the design options presented by the Neighborhood Design Center

as historic were, not surprisingly, near Roosevelt Center.

Design Considerations

Councilmember Danielle McKinney raised a concern that the colors (based on the city's logo, and using teal green with white lettering as the bold component and backgrounds of lighter green or white) would not maximize visual accessibility.

Councilmember Kristin Weaver noted also that temporary signage (such as fabric signs strung across streets to announce events) might be included in the list. Councilmember Amy Knesel inquired about sign placement and was assured that location signs would be at the point of entry to the destination while informational kiosks would be internal to it.

Colors and Typeface

Whichever theme is selected, it will undergo an additional scrub to confirm colors and materials. The design team seemed to prefer a more modern typeface, while the city's affinity with the New Deal and art deco style was likely to predispose reviewers to styles reminiscent of the city's origins. The colors proposed also deliberately reflect the colors of the lake and woods, receiving Mayor Emmett Jordan's approbation.

Surrounding Cities

The design team has not yet consulted with neighboring cities on the possibility of a coordinated approach where the same wayfinding concepts are deployed but with each city having its own clearly differentiated but coordinated branding.

Costs

In this preliminary step, budget was not under discussion. Resident Bill Orleans wanted to know who is going to pay and how much. Assistant Director of Planning and Community Development Jaime Fearer noted that once plans were further advanced and a budget approximated, grant funding will be sought.

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PHOTO COURTESY MNCPPC

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Greenbelt High School Now Historic

In May the Prince George's County Historical Preservation Commission designated the 1938 Greenbelt High School building, today's Dora Kennedy French Immersion (DKFI) school, as a Prince George's County Historic Site.

The building has been in poor condition since at least 2007 when it housed Greenbelt Middle School. In January 2024 Prince George's County Public Schools (PGCPS) cited plans to move DKFI in 2026, operate Springhill Lake Elementary School (SHLES) there from 2026 to 2028 and then demolish the building, leading the city to request historic site designation.

The designation will help protect and maintain the building. Challenges remain for DKFI and SHLES since PGCPS plans minimal improvements during their occupancy through 2028.

Greenbelt City Manager Josué Salmerón wrote, "I am hopeful that once the school facility is decommissioned ... we will be intentional about repurposing the site for continued use as a community asset, similarly to how the Community Center, originally the city's elementary school, is now a community asset."

JEDI Audits, Action Team, Rebuke

Results of a 2023 Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (JEDI) audit of city government were reported to city council in January, describing employees who feel their work environment is unhealthy, colleagues unwilling to share knowledge or power, resistance to new ideas, little partnership between departments and inefficient processes affecting workloads.

Council asked city staff to address the findings, resulting in a top-down approach, including educating leaders and supervisors on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and a bottom-up approach, including the creation of the JEDI action team of employees. In April the team formed as an advisory group to aid decision-making on improving the city workplace.

In December, a report of a JEDI audit of residents listed strengths, including a small-town feeling, parks and trails, senior services, community policing, accessible events and challenges including insufficient communication between neighborhoods and a lack of inclusivity. The city released a draft JEDI vision statement and justice, equity, diversity and inclusion definitions for resident feedback.

In August, Councilmember Rodney Roberts questioned a Public Works proposal to pay an automobile dealer to replace a city vehicle engine. He said, "If you're dumb enough to take that [price quote], then you are." Employees contacted the JEDI action team, which requested action by council.

Councilmember Kristen Weaver put the issue on council's agenda in December, following the JEDI action team's recommendation that Roberts be censured for comments the team deemed "disrespectful, demeaning and abusive." Several speakers at the meeting defended Roberts and questioned the authority of the team over council. In the end, council voted 5 to 2, with Roberts and Silke Pope opposed, to rebuke (not censure) Roberts.

All-Resident Voting in City

In September, Greenbelt City Council approved all-resident voting in city elections. This followed a November 2023 referendum in which 59 percent of voters approved the measure for noncitizens who meet residency requirements. The city joined other local municipalities in doing so, including Hyattsville, Mount Rainier, Colmar Manor, Cheverly, Takoma Park, Frederick and the District of Columbia.

Residents who spoke at the council meeting cited immigrants' contributions to the community and the tax base, and that amid national rhetoric marginalizing immigrant communities, "people are easy targets when they don't have a voice in their political process."

Noncitizens must register 21 days before an election and show proof of residency or sign an affidavit. Proof might include a driver's license, a utility bill or a document from the University of Maryland or the State of Maryland with a Greenbelt address.

Mayor Emmett Jordan said, "Today Greenbelt takes an historic

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PHOTO BY ANNA BEDFORD-DILLON

Dora Kennedy French Immersion, formerly Greenbelt High School



PHOTO COURTESY CITY OF GREENBELT

Rodney Roberts

Council Votes on ARPA Funding For Open Contracts over \$10,000

by Matthew Arbach

On December 18, in addition to the worksession on the DEI audit (see article in the December 26 issue), the Greenbelt City Council held a special meeting to vote on several open contracts exceeding \$10,000 where American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds would be utilized. December 31 is the deadline for the encumbering of funds, with the actual allocation having to be completed by December 31, 2026.

Approved Expenditures

By a 6 to 1 vote, council approved \$14,120 for new tables and chairs for the council chambers. The tables will be collapsible for better use of the space.

Council voted unanimously to approve up to \$14,738.38 for a new Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) trailer. The existing vendor is Propac USA. There was much dismay over the inflated shipping charges, nearly

30 percent of the actual cost. The unanimous vote included the caveat that if a cheaper, perhaps more local, distributor is found then council will go with that option.

Concerning the Braden Athletic Complex Public Art Project, up to \$50,000 was approved for all facets of the endeavor. Arts Supervisor Nicole DeWald said that a winner from a group of four finalists will be chosen soon.

In order to create a more precise and detailed mapping of the city's assets (all physical aspects of the city that the city maintains), \$12,746.20 was unanimously approved for vendor Duncan-Parnell to supply two Global Positioning System (GPS) units. City Manager Josué Salmerón envisions a future app where all residents can report and accurately pinpoint any concern or hazard, like a falling tree or water main break.

A sum of \$23,745 was approved for two HVAC units for the Animal Shelter. Salmerón pointed out that an entirely new building ultimately is needed but that this effort will "buy us time." Work on the roof and subfloor hopefully will be done around the same time as the unit installations.

Mics or PPE?

There was a lengthy discussion on two proposals to upgrade the audiovisual tech in council chambers. One contract for \$11,272 would install permanent mics on the dais, with the existing wired mics at the tables retained. The other offer was for \$26,000 and would upgrade the system to state-of-the-art wireless Shure mics, which are usable at other events. Council all agreed on the difficulties with the current system, acknowledging the benefits of the wireless option. Yet the large cost for the latter was felt to be prohibitive. Also, the Greenbelt Police Department needs new personal protective equipment (PPE) in the coming year, which seemed to council a better use for the funds. As the details of this matter were only presented that evening, council desired more time to consider the solution.

In the end, it was decided to postpone the vote on this matter and instead replace and/or repair any equipment as needed, this not requiring a contract vote. ARPA funds, as part of the lost revenue category, could be used in the near future if council decided to go forward with a more comprehensive solution.

The evening ended with a closed executive session.

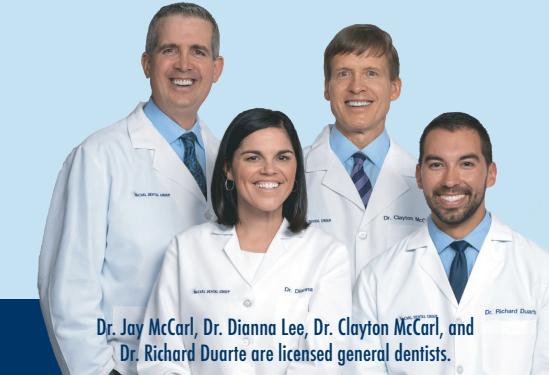


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TOP STORIES continued from page 7

step forward in inclusive governance with the passage of all-resident voting. It's a reflection of our community's commitment to ensuring that every resident has an opportunity to participate in the process ... we reaffirm that in Greenbelt every resident counts."

Youth Excel in Many Areas

In academic competitions, Aashi Moola and Joshua Herrera Guzman won first place awards in the Eleanor Roosevelt High School (ERHS) History Day event, placed in the state competition and went on to compete in National History Day. ERHS student Yashasri Gouda won the first-place grand award in the Prince George's Area Science Fair and advanced to the Regeneron International Science and Engineering Fair. Teams from Dora Kennedy French Immersion and Greenbelt Middle schools placed in the county Middle Grades Math Meet.

In robotics, the Greenbelt Bots team won first prize in the Innovation category in a Maryland FIRST Lego League qualifying event and was invited to compete in the state championship. The Air Tigers, a community robotics club, won the Engineering Inspiration Award in a FIRST Robotics District Competition and six squads from the ERHS Robotics Club competed in the state championships, with three going on to compete in the VEX Robotics World Championship.

In sports, the Greenbelt Cricket Team again won its league championship and the Barracudas swim team finished second in their division. ERHS teams made it to the state finals in softball and won the county championship in both cross country and girls soccer. Fiona O'Brien won a team medal in the USA Gymnastics National Championship and was named to the Acro National Team, and swimmer Zack Shattuck won a relay team medal in the Paris Paralympics.

Eclipse Enthralls Greenbelters

The solar eclipse on April 8 brought smiles and a sense of wonder to those who viewed the rare phenomenon locally, where the moon blocked 89 percent of the sun. Nearly 200 people chose the Greenbelt Observatory as a viewing site, using special glasses handed out by the Astronomical Society of Greenbelt or looking at the images captured by the observatory telescope. Others used a variety of devices, including colanders, to cast crescent-shaped shadows as the moon blocked the sun.

Meanwhile, numerous Greenbelters traveled far and wide to view the eclipse in its

See TOP STORIES, page 12



The Greenbelt Bots Team, from left: Soham Chaudhuri, Spandana Noojipady, Mary Winter-nitz and Tanvi Saha

PHOTO BY PRAVEEN NOOJIPADY



Four-year-old Lazarus attends the eclipse viewing at Greenbelt Observatory.

PHOTO BY PAT SCULLY

HEAT continued from page 1

es for owners who are elderly or not native English speakers. Fomalont has found the warmest place to sleep is on her couch with many blankets. Lauren, a 19-year resident, said she and her children have been sick and "to top it off, when you plug heaters in the power goes out." Residents that the News Review spoke to said excavations caused reduced parking and mountains of mud in front of buildings. Others described going to their cars for warmth. Resident Tonyia Thompson told WUSA9 she could go to her sister's small home for shelter but doesn't want to leave the home she owns.

Another resident said water was repeatedly turned off for up to a day at a time for heating work this fall. When the News Review visited Chelsea Wood on December 29, condo owner Jeffrey Samuels, whose family has lived there since 2000, said multiple air conditioning and heating failures occur each year, but never before for this long.

Condo Complications

Getting help is complicated by several factors. Renters' rights don't apply because condominiums are owned. Chelsea Wood has a Greenbelt ZIP code but is located in an unincorporated area outside the municipal boundary. Homeowner's insurance doesn't apply because the HVAC system is owned by the condo, so Cox's homeowner's insurance won't cover a hotel stay for her family.

No Results from County

On December 28, Cox and Fomalont reported requesting help from county and state officials with no results yet. Cox listed attempts to engage the Prince George's County Community Relations/Common Ownership Communities office, County Councilmember Eric Olson, U.S. Representative Glenn Ivey and the offices of Maryland Attorney General Anthony Brown and Governor Wes Moore. Residents have contacted NBC4, WUSA9,

WJLA and DC News Now. Fomalont said a response from Olson was copied to Lamont Hinton, deputy director of the county's Department of Permitting, Inspections and Enforcement, which includes county code enforcement.

Cox was told by Common Ownership Communities Office staff that they contacted the county attorney on December 20 with no response by December 27. Fomalont, Cox and other residents opened PGC311 tickets (the county's request form for follow-up assistance), at least one of which was closed without the submitter being contacted. Cox has begun organizing neighbors



Hot water pipes at Chelsea Wood's boiler building on December 29

PHOTO BY ERICA JOHNS

to track communications with officials and plan next steps.

Aging Infrastructure, Inadequate Finances

Condominium boards and management companies are responsible for maintaining common infrastructure from funds

See HEAT, page 9



PRELIMINARY AGENDA
Meetings of the GHI Board of Directors
on January 9, 2025

GHI Closed Meeting – starts at 7:00 p.m. - closed to members and visitors

- Approve Minutes of the GHI Closed Meeting Held on October 17, 2024
- Approve Minutes of the GHI Closed Meeting Held on November 7, 2024
- Approve Minutes of the GHI Closed Meeting Held on November 21, 2024
- Legal Matter
- Member Matter

GHI Open Meeting – starts after GHI Closed Meeting - open to members and visitors

- Statement of Closed Meeting Held on January 9, 2025
- Approve Minutes of the GHI Open Meeting Held on October 17, 2024
- Approve Minutes of the GHI Open Meeting Held on November 7, 2024
- Approve Minutes of the GHI Open Meeting Held on November 21, 2024
- Joe Douglass Transition to Senior Counsel
- Public Library Story Walk
- Plumbing Pipe Replacement Program Sequencing Document
- ARPA Funding for Lights 11-13 Court Ridge
- Member Handbook Taskforce Recommendations
- Motion to Hold a Closed Meeting on January 23, 2025

Members and visitors who wish to attend the Open meetings must register in advance via the following link:

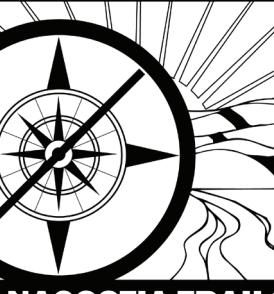
https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZwtd-uuqzoiG9XHGq9rswP_N9LZj3gb19r

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.



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Police Blotter

Incidents reported here occurred December 23-30, 2024. Readers are encouraged to contact the police if they have information that may aid in an enquiry. Call the non-emergency number 301-474-7200 or email pd@greenbeltd.gov. Times provided are when the incidents were reported.

Incident Summary

Greenbelt Police reported four domestic incidents, one with arrest, and one death.

Disorderly

On December 24 at 12:15 a.m. at 5717 Greenbelt Metro Drive, a man created a disturbance when told to leave the train platform. He was arrested and transported to the Department of Corrections.

Assault

On December 25 near 7451 Hanover Drive, two men were engaged in a dispute that turned physical.

Trespass

On December 26 near 25 Crescent Road, a trespasser was arrested after being found in a city building after hours.

Fraud

On December 27 near 5508 Stream Bank Lane, after receiving fake checks for gift card purchases, a man was scammed out of money.

On December 29 near 8000 Greenbelt Station Parkway, an unknown person used the victim's name to open a bank account.

Theft

On December 23 near 7459 Greenbelt Road, a man who had concealed merchandise was captured. On December 26 near 6160 Greenbelt Road, used oil from a storage container was stolen; and near 7455 Greenbelt Road, a person stole merchandise. On December 27 near 7515 Mandan Road, a victim reported that a delivered package was stolen from the porch; near 6100 Greenbelt Road, loss prevention staff noted a man and woman stealing items. Both were taken into custody. On December 28 near 6100 Greenbelt Road, a man and woman were observed stealing items. They drove away in a silver Mercury sedan.

Drug Deal Leads To Homicide

Twenty-year-old Jaiden Thomas of Silver Spring has been arrested for the December 15 shooting on Greenbelt Road that killed 18-year-old Rasheed Davis of Germantown and left another man in critical condition from gunshot wounds.

Detectives believe Thomas did not know the teenager he is charged with murdering and that the shooting occurred during a drug transaction.

Thomas is charged with first- and second-degree murder and faces other related charges. He is in the custody of the Prince George's County Department of Corrections.

Anyone with information on this case who would like to speak to a Homicide Unit detective may call 301-516-2512.

This report was compiled using information from announcements made by Prince George's County Police Department.

Crisis Hotline's Number is 988

The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline dialing code is 988. Calls and text messages are confidential and free.

Kim Kash

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GREENBELT NEWS REVIEW

HEAT continued from page 8

raised through condo fees and special assessments. Fomalont, Cox, Samuels and others said their condo fees have increased and they each paid thousands in special assessments in the last two years. Fomalont said she has repeatedly suggested to the board the idea of dividing the repair cost by 280 units, with no response.

Other communities have faced the consequences of not gradually accumulating reserve funds to update aging shared infrastructure. Greenbelt Homes, Inc., also responsible for major maintenance in the cooperative ownership model (it is not a condo), was in a similar position in the 1970s when insufficient reserves required large loans to replace major systems. Since then, successive GHI boards have maintained larger reserves. Nearby Westchester Park condo owners learned in 2022 that replacing aged systems in their building could cost \$15,000 to \$45,000 per unit.

Delinquent Owners

Delinquent Chelsea Wood condo fees exacerbate the problem of funds for repairs. Maryland court records show many court cases

against Chelsea Wood owners, with 12 in 2024 alone. One resident said many units were bought as investment properties and then sublet. She wrote, "This place is a case study in how important it is to think it through before going condo."

Samuels doesn't believe he should suffer because others are delinquent.

Holidays without Heat

On December 29, heat was available in a few buildings, including that of Samuels. Other buildings, including those of Cox and Fomalont, were not so fortunate. Even at Samuels' building, problems remained. Hot water was flowing from an outdoor hole next to an excavator and a mud pile, and Samuels said there was a leak into his neighbor's basement unit.

Fomalont said she just wants to see better planning, good communication, honesty and heat. On January 2, Cox told the News Review she still had no heat, as temperatures began to sharply drop.



MCCARL continued from page 1

Burn Group and tutored and mentored Annapolis schoolchildren with Seeds 4 Success. He plans to remain active in his retirement.

Local Boy

Dr. Jay has had strong ties to Greenbelt throughout his life. In addition to practicing here his entire career, he was born in Greenbelt, worked for Public

Works in high school and married a Greenbelt girl, the former Kim Scheibel; both his birth and marriage were announced in the News Review.

In January, Tommy Lam, D.D.S., who worked part-time for the McCarl Dental Group over the past five years, will join the practice as a full-time dentist.

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City Notes

The City Manager, Assistant City Manager and Finance collaborated on final American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds allocation documentation, due at the U.S. Treasury by December 31. The Grant Coordinator processed a grant award notice for a \$25,450 computer lab grant submitted by the Greenbelt Assistance in Living program.

Economic Development held a ribbon-cutting event for ARPA-funded improvements at the Laugh-Out-Loud Amusement Center. Planning & Community Development issued five building permits and inspected eight rentals.

The Animal Shelter is empty for improvements, with one cat in a foster home.

Public Works prepared streets, parking lots and sidewalks for freezing rain and installed carpeting in the Municipal Building. At the Aquatic & Fitness Center outdoor pool, contractors replaced hair-straining equipment.

The Community Center hosted a CHEARS-sponsored presentation by the International Federation of Women Lawyers and a holiday dance party for the Mediterranean and Beyond group.

Therapeutic Recreation hosted the Senior Nutrition Program holiday party and welcomed a new Therapeutic Recreation Coordinator, promoted from within.

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BOXED: \$10.90/column inch. Minimum 1.5 inches (\$16.35). Deadline 2 p.m. Monday for ads that need to be set up, including those needing clip art and/or borders. 6 p.m. Tuesday for camera-ready ads. Certs and Notarizations each \$10.

NEEDED: Please include name, phone number and address with ad copy. Ads not considered accepted until published.

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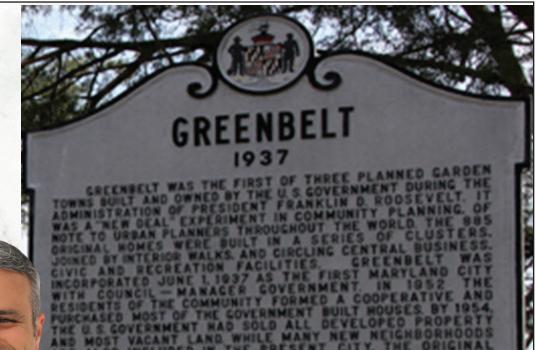
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2025



Sports

Accolades Cap ERHS Girls Soccer Season

by Patrick Gleason

While the Eleanor Roosevelt High School Girls Soccer team celebrates the holidays with their respective families, the program has a successful 2024 to celebrate as recently announced individual accolades complement the team's impressive season. The Maryland Association of Coaches of Soccer (MACS) selected Roosevelt senior Jada Savage for the girls all-state first team after she received honorable mention as a sophomore. MACS selects the top 30 players across the state, including both public and private schools for the first team, followed by 30 players for the second team and 30 for honorable mention. Roosevelt junior Autumn Freeman earned honorable mention honors from MACS as well, while the Washington Post named both players to the honorable mention All-Met team.

Savage ended a savage season with 29 goals and 10 assists, including eight hat tricks. Her high school career ends with 71 goals and 30 assists, the engine of the Raider offense for the last four seasons. Out of necessity, Savage played center midfield for the Raiders in her first three seasons before moving to a more freeing space on the wing as a senior. Savage's most recent soccer exploits include training with the under-20 Jamaican National Team.

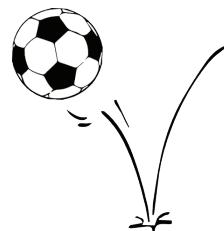
Meanwhile, Freeman performs many of the unsung jobs for the Raiders as a center defensive midfielder. Constantly intercepting passes, Freeman thwarts the opponent's attack before it begins, while she also added two goals and two assists a year after tallying eight goals. Freeman is weighing offers from several impressive college programs as she heads into her final high school season.

Finally, the all-county soccer first team included a plethora of Raiders as Roosevelt and Laurel headlined the selections with seven players each. Savage, senior fullback Alena Beckmann, senior midfielder Hariette Ngwatung and

junior centerback Esther Obisesan earned first-team selections. Freeman, goalkeeper Nicole Lilja and senior midfielder Sadie Swart received second-team honors.

With an impressive year complete, the Raiders are prepared to make 2025 as fruitful, as they return 14 players from a league, county and region championship squad.

- Photos by Vanessa van der Have



Juniors on the ERHS soccer team at the 7 to 0 county championship victory over Oxon Hill on October 22: from left, Yadira Reyes Carranza, Karina Reyes Carranza, Esther Obisesan, Autumn Freeman, Sofia Zuniga, Claudia van der Have and Leilah Eggleston



The four three-year varsity juniors at the soccer county championship on October 22: from left, Autumn Freeman, Sofia Zuniga, Esther Obisesan and Claudia van der Have



Jada Savage wears the County MVP shirt after earning the award at the county championship game.



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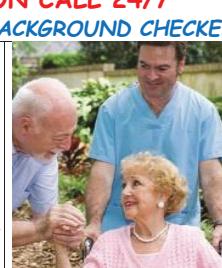
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Stations for Story Walk Take Shape on Paths Near Library

by Anna Bedford-Dillow



PHOTO BY BARBARA BJANES

Twenty stations are planned along the Story Walk.

Residents may have noticed the appearance of posts and frames around the area of the library over the last week. They are a prelude to the Story Walk, a pilot project designed to take young readers from page to page along a walk near the library.

Twenty stations will be installed along the trail from the Braden Field tennis courts, beside the Peace Pole, through the underpass below Crescent Road and onto the path that encircles the playground by the Greenbelt Museum. Each station will hold the laminated page of a children's book in sequential order. Library staff will change the books approximately every six weeks.

The City of Greenbelt awarded a \$20,000 nonprofit American Rescue Plan Act Recovery Grant

to the Prince George's County Memorial Library System for the Story Walk project. The project was reviewed by the Park and Recreation Advisory Board, Advisory Planning Board and the Advisory Committee on Education. On April 8, 2024, the Greenbelt City Council voted six to one (with Councilmember Amy Knesel opposed) to support the 18-month pilot project (see the April 18 issue). At that meeting, it was stated that the Library will help with maintenance and, if successful, other locations within Greenbelt, such as Springhill Lake and Greenbelt Station, will be considered for additional Story Walks.

The program will be reviewed in 18 months.

TOP STORIES continued from page 8

totality. News Review photographers and Goddard employees Jerry Bonnell and Jeff Jones were in Illinois and Ohio, respectively, to capture stunning photos of totality. Other points along the path of totality that Greenbelters visited were in New York, Ohio and Ontario, Canada.

New Deal Café Has New Vendor, New Look

With continuing financial difficulties threatening the existence of the New Deal Café, the Café's board of directors ended its contract with the Greenbelt Co-op Supermarket and Pharmacy as food and beverage vendor. The board voted in July to award the contract to restaurant owner and musician Kenny Hilliard, to take effect November 1. The goal, according to Hilliard, is to offer more variety in memorable experiences, food choices with exhilarating flavors and new stage performances. Elements of the Café will remain the same, such as a cozy setting where patrons can connect with friends or enjoy breakfast, lunch and dinner or just a cup of coffee.

A new menu, offering a variety of choices for omnivores through vegans, began to take shape in early November, along with new décor and new furnishings, including a big-screen TV in the front room so overflow crowds from the back room can watch the musical offerings on the stage.



PHOTO BY ANNA BEDFORD-DILLOW

Kenny Hilliard stands behind the bar in the New Deal Café.

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Local Family Celebrates Kwanzaa

by Dan Celdran



PHOTO BY DAN CELDRAN

Kwanzaa, which takes place from December 26 to January 1, is a time for families and communities to come together to remember the past and to celebrate African American culture. Kwanzaa, meaning 'first fruits,' is celebrated by giving thanks for harvests or fruits of one's labor and the accomplishments of one's children. The Seven Principles (Nguzo Saba) of Kwanzaa are Unity (Umoja), Self-Determination (Kujichagulia), Collective Work and Responsibility (Ujima), Cooperative Economics (Ujamaa), Purpose (Nia), Creativity (Kuumba) and Faith (Imani).

The photo shows how my family interprets the traditional African symbols used to teach these values. Our coffee table is adorned with a dashiki my husband brought back from a humanitarian trip to Ghana. On it are Mkeka, a straw mat (place-

mat) that represents African traditions, the foundation upon which we build. Kinara, a candle holder (made from an egg carton and colored popsicle sticks), holds seven candles, the Mishumma:

three red candles on the left represent struggle, one black candle in the middle (lit on the first day) represents the people and three green candles on the right represent the future and hope. Zwadi are gifts (real fruit and a symbolic box), the fruits of the labor of the parents, given to the children as rewards and encouragement to continue to practice good African values. Muhiundi, ears of corn (ours are paperweights), one for each child, represent their potential to carry on and continue Black life. Kikombe, is a unity cup (a plastic goblet received as a gift) that everyone drinks from during the daily Kwanzaa ceremony.

The whole family joins in cleaning, decorating and preparing the house for this celebration.

Celebrating Kwanzaa broadens my perspective and appreciation of people and cultures.

Handcrafted Gift Giveaway Brightens the Holiday Season

by Bonnie Schrack

For the past several years, Leslee Clapp has given an extraordinary gift to her community: a large selection of beautiful gifts that she has made by hand are shared for free on a morning in December. This year it was December 14. It takes Clapp many months to create all the items she offers her Greenbelt neighbors on this one morning. Anyone can visit her court and pick out whatever appeals to them from the unique creations on display in her court's parking lot. Helping with this undertaking is her granddaughter Norah, age 10.

Visitors saw many different kinds of ornaments, plenty that were Christmas-related, but more were colorful and whimsical creations that would brighten any home year-round. There were beautiful wooden boxes, handbags sewn from old neckties, decorated journal notebooks and lots of pillows.

"I started giving away my artsy stuff because I was so grateful to all my Greenbelt neighbors who made me feel at home," said Clapp. "We moved to Greenbelt to be near our son and his family. We only knew them, but that soon changed. Now I know lots of Greenbelters because it is a friendly place to live. I just want to say thank you. I also love giving gifts."

Clapp participates in one of the Buy Nothing groups on Facebook, and this allows her to put names and faces together when some of her friends there stop by in person. She enjoys seeing the pictures some people have sent her of where they have placed her gifts in their homes. Perhaps a few more Greenbelters will be inspired to hold a giveaway themselves.



Leslee Clapp and her granddaughter Norah display her crafts.

- Photos by Bonnie Schrack



Visitors browse gifts that Leslee Clapp makes by hand and offers for free in her "store."